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RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 000996

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR ELAINE SAMSON AND STACIE ZERDECKI, EUR/WE
ALBERT KRAAIMOORE, WHA/CEN
USEU FOR BOB BLACKSTONE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/15/2018

TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [NU](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE RESPONSE: SPAIN UNLIKELY TO GO AFTER
NICARAGUA ON RECOGNITIONS

REF: STATE 96677

Classified By: DCM Arnold Chacon, for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[¶1.](#) (C) Poloff conveyed concerns per reftel and asked that Spain consider speaking out against Nicaraguan President Ortega's September 2 decision to recognize the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Spanish MFA Sub-Director General for Mexico, Central America and The Caribbean Jorge Romeu told poloff September 16 that although he and his colleagues had discussed Ortega's announcement during coordination meetings, his impression was that Spain would not be proactive in addressing it. Overall, Romeu was skeptical of the positive outcome of demarching the GON, saying he knew the response would reference Kosovo. Reacting subsequently to if raised points regarding Kosovo, he noted Russia might say the same, that its recognition of the two republics was a "special case" that should not be viewed as a precedent, either. He added that the comparisons did not affect Spain anyway, because the GOS has yet to recognize Kosovo.

[¶2.](#) (C) Romeu deferred to the expertise of his colleagues who cover Eastern Europe and suggested the Spanish were more likely to act within the EU framework than bilaterally. He described a Danish proposal to carry out a demarche expressing the EU's "surprise" and "regret," and said he sympathized with the reluctance on the part of EU partners to speak out in those terms. Saying some within the EU had suggested ending cooperation with Nicaragua altogether over this and other of Ortega's actions, Romeu cautioned that Spain -- at the level of the Director General for Foreign Policy -- would only consider demarching Nicaragua in an "appropriate context," reshaping terms and perhaps considering an "explanatory demarche" rather than a derogatory one. After all, Romeu said, Ortega is "a mad man."
Aguirre